

5.0 MAINTENANCE

This chapter describes the procedures for maintaining the Federal implementation conventions and for submitting suggested changes to improve their overall effectiveness. Additional information on version/release timing is provided in Section 5.2.

5.1 MAINTAINING GUIDELINE

The NIST is tasked with the responsibility for implementation convention maintenance within the government. Critical functions within this responsibility include maintaining configuration control (e.g., versions of ASC X12 and algorithms applied), coordinating participation in standards development, and ensuring compliance with approved EDI standards.

To accomplish these functions, previous guidelines have been established that describe the conventions and standards development and maintenance process. The objectives of this process are: (1) obtaining ASC X12 data requirements from government components for presentation to the applicable ASC X12 subcommittee for consideration as ASC X12 standards, and (2) developing, staffing, and maintaining conventions for use by government components and their potential trading partners.

To allow for EDI's maximum usage throughout the government and its trading partners, changes may be required to both standards and conventions. The administering body is the primary agent to effect this change. To avoid duplication of effort, however, government components are encouraged to establish focal points for the central receipt of EDI change requests within their respective services and agencies.

The EDI user is the primary source of information regarding government's data requirements. Recommended changes to this publication or any conventions should be submitted through organizational focal points to the NIST Registry for review by functional workgroups under the SMC.

5.2 MAINTAINING X12 STANDARDS

If an approved change to these conventions requires a change to the ASC X12 standards, the SMC will forward appropriate data maintenance (DM) following ASC X12 procedures.

5.3 VERSION/RELEASE TIMING

Because both standards and conventions represent dynamic, living documents, identification of the official "version" is critical to the successful interchange of information. Each participant must be able to send and receive data under the same "rules" to ensure the accuracy of the information exchanged. It is therefore essential that parties communicate to each other the version under which each operates.

This version information is transmitted with each EDI exchange as a 12-character code in the Functional Group Header segment (GS) in data element #480, Version/Release/Industry ID. The ID is placed within each functional group to ensure consistency between trading partners for *each* transaction type sent in an EDI exchange. The 12-character code is used by ASC X12 as follows:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Content</u>
1–3	Version number
4–5	Release level of version
6	Subrelease
7–12	Government/Industry or Trade Association

ASC X12 assigns the codes in positions 1 through 6.

The major version number (1–3) will change only after an official public review cycle, leading to publication of a new American National Standard (approximately every 5 years).

The release level (4–5) within each major version will begin at “00” and will be incremented by 1 for each new ASC X12 approved publication, usually once a year. Position 6 designates the *subrelease*.

Government/Industry/Trade Association ID (7–12) identifies the implementation convention used between trading partners. Government activities will use positions 7–11 as follows: “Fed” followed by the 10th and 11th characters which will identify successive publications of the specific implementation convention. For example, FED1 signifies the first publication of the Federal implementation conventions. Future publications will be identified as FED2, FED3, etc.

Federal conventions for using ASC X12 standards are published periodically, conventions will be maintained for the current version/release plus two previous versions/releases for which conventions were published.